

Matchless Villany :

OR,

A FULL and AUTHENTIC
NARRATIVE
OF THE
ROBBERY and MURDER
OF

John Penny, Esq;

IN A

LETTER from a GENTLEMAN in LONDON,
to his Friend in HAMPSHIRE.

WITH

Many surprising Circumstances relating both to the Perpetrating and Discovery of those horrid Facts.

A CHARACTER of the murder'd Gentleman.

Some Account of the Life of his Servant *James Hall*, (now in Newgate)

the supposed perfidious Robber, and cruel Murderer.

The Copies of divers LETTERS that passed between him, his Brother, his Father, and Others, which very much tend to set the Whole in a TRUE LIGHT.

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A Full and Authentic
NARRATIVE
OF THE
ROBBING and MURDERING
John Penny, *Esq;*



S I R,



S I pay a great Regard, and
always shall, to your Requests
in general, I have, you will
find, so far comply'd with your
last, as to give you, and at the
same Time the Public, the best Account
it has, after the strictest, and most careful

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Enquiry, been in my Power to procure, of the dreadful Murder committed on the 18th of the last Month, in one of our Inns of Court, as 'tis commonly call'd; and of the Person, who, from a large Number of Circumstances, appearing with a threatening Aspect towards him, is, by all Sorts and Degrees of People here, thought to be the MAN, by whose perfidious, unrelenting Hands the MASTER fell.

And give me Leave so far to anticipate your Judgment, Sir, as to take upon me to affirm, that if the real Murderer is already pitched upon, and, *if an universal, and a firm Belief of his being so, may be of any Weight*, he most certainly is discovered; there has not been for many Ages perhaps there never was, considering the Obligations, and the Relation he stood in, to the unhappy murdered Gentleman, so butcherly a Murder; so unnatural, and so shocking, in all the Parts of it, committed in this Kingdom, as that which the vile, detestable Wretch has obliged us to be thus Witnesses to in the present Day.

To make this appear an incontestable Truth, and at the same Time to satisfy your own, and your Friends Enquiry, who the suspected Criminal is, and what he was, I am obliged, before I enter upon a particular Detail of the direful Facts, which
Nature

Nature must shrink at a Review of, to give you a short and a general Narrative of the suspected Malefactor, from his Birth, to the fatal Period in which he is said to have dipp'd his execrable Hands in the Blood of his kind, indulgent, beneficent Master; whom, from his constant Treatment of him, and Behaviour to him, ought to have been considered by a thus favour'd Servant, rather as a Parent than a Master, and to have commanded from him the most affectionate grateful Returns, Duty and Inclination uniting, could have enforced, rather than the cruel Treatment by which he fell a Sacrifice, as 'tis imagined, to his Profligacy and Lust.

The Person now in *Newgate*, (on the best supported Suspicions, that perhaps ever Man or Woman became a Prisoner there, when positive Oath of committing the Fact, or their own Confession was wanting) is one *James Hall*, the youngest Son of very honest, worthy, and every Way reputable Parents, at *Crowndle*, near *Odiham* in *Hampshire*; and at *Stapeley* Farm by *Odiham*, where his second Brother, whose Name is *William*, now lives, and which is one of the largest and best Farms in *Hampshire*, *James Hall* was born. He is now in the Thirty-ninth Year of his Age, and his Father, if Grief upon the
present

present melancholly Occasion don't hurry his grey Hairs with Sorrow to his Grave, being still hale and healthful, tho' Eighty Years of Age, is very likely to survive the expected dreadful Catastrophe of this his unhappy Son. The Elder Brother, whose Name is *Michael*, is settled in a Farm called *Wells*, but a little Distance from his Brother *William*: These Two are in very good Circumstances; they live esteemed and valued by all who know them; and are looked upon by the Country round, to be not only substantial Farmers, but rich. The Father has for some Years left off all Manner of Business, and lived, as he does at present, upon the Income, the Integrity, Industry, and Application of his younger Years enabled him, after having brought up, and provided for all his Children, to reserve as an independent Support for himself in his old Age.

There is besides these another Brother, who is the youngest except *James*; he was bred and set up a *Butcher* in the Country; but though he is not chargeable with any Mistakes which might bring Misfortunes upon himself, yet he has not prov'd so successful in the World as his two elder Brothers have done: Misfortunes and Disappointments in Life multiply'd too fast upon him,

him, to allow him to keep his Ground ; and, though he still makes Shift to live, (and he lives honestly, though he lives but meanly) yet he has been more dependant for sometime upon, and more beholden to the kind Assistance of his Father, and his Two Brothers in the Country, for a Maintenance, than to all the Efforts he has lately been able to make of procuring one for himself.

As this short Account of the Family was necessary to make this Narrative consistent with itself and compleat, so I doubt not but that, however short, it will be thought sufficient. I return therefore, my Friend, to him who has been personally concerned in furnishing out the dismal Subject of the following Sheets.

Mr. *Hall*, as two of his Sons are, was himself in the Farming Way ; and he brought up this his youngest Son under him to the same Business, designing, when he was of Years and fit for it, to have settled him in the Country under his Eye, as he had done his Brothers. He took Care of their School Education, and gave each of them one suitable to that Station of Life he had proposed they should afterwards act in ; and the Person, whom he now considers as his most unfortunate Son, took the Learning which was given him equally to his

his Satisfaction, with that of his other Children; when about 14 Years old, and after he could Read, Write, and Cypher, sufficiently well, by properly practising at leisure Hours at Home, to render himself as much Master of these as he need to have been, his Father took him from School; and began to employ him, as usual at first, in the little under Offices in the Stable, and about his Farm, which his Growth and Strength would admit of. He behav'd well, prov'd very docible, and gave his Father great Hopes of his doing well in the World; as indeed, tho' he fancy'd to change his manner of Life, he might have done after all, had it not been, as is much feared, his own Fault.

He continued with his Father till he came to Man's Estate; when often going with the Team with Corn to *Reading* and *Kingston* Markets, he at length became acquainted with some Meal Men his Father dealt with, and then he took it into his Head, that their Business was better than his own; upon which he left his Father to go and live with a Meal-Man at *Reading*, in *Berkshire*; he served this new Master well and faithfully, for a considerable Time; but, hankering after *London*, he gave his Master Warning, and quitted his Place for one with a Man of the same Business at *Queenbith*;

Queenbith; here he continued longer than in his last Service; and behav'd in this, as well as the former, with Diligence and Faithfulness; but being at last somewhat tired of what he had seem'd for several Years to be fond of, and even delight in, a laborious Way of Life; and a very favourable Opportunity presenting at that Juncture, he readily embraced it, and was so happy as he then accounted it, to become a Servant to a worthy Gentleman in the Practice of the Law, who was one Mr. *Dickson*, then of *Lincoln's-Inn*, but since deceased: He serv'd this Gentleman about four Years, and in a manner so acceptable to him, that he gave him as good a Character as any Servant could ask, or desire should be given him, when they parted; and it was then the thorough Belief of all his Acquaintance, that how good soever this Character was, it was really no better than what he had deserved.

This Attestation to the Justness of his past Behaviour; this Recommendation of him, under Mr. *Dickenson's* own Hand, for his Fidelity, and a right Discharge of his Duty, whilst with him, pav'd the Way to Mr. *Penny's* Acceptance of him, and the only Introduction to his ever having it in his Power of becoming the most wicked of Servants, *should Suspicions not deceive us*, to one of the best of Masters.

Unfortunate for Mr. *Penny*; unfortunate indeed should all that is believ'd prove true, the lately murder'd, massacrated Gentleman, was at this Time looking out for a Servant, to succeed one who had then lived with him about eight Years and a Quarter; and, who being married, was with Mr. *Penny's* Consent preparing to enter upon a Method of Livelihood more agreeable to his alter'd Condition; and by which he might be better able to provide for a Family than by that he was then in; this *James Hall* hearing of, and being out of Place, attended Mr. *Penny*, with an Offer of his Service, and this Offer was not more readily, *tho' immediately upon Mr. Dickenson's Recommendation only*, than unhappily accepted of, should the accused be found to be the guilty Person.

And now, Sir, you are to suppose *James Hall* enter'd upon this Place, Mr. *Penny's* former Servant gone away, and he in his Room: *James Hall* carry'd himself very well, and seem'd to promise the proving so acceptable to Mr. *Penny*, that he was in great Hopes the Loss of the valuable Servant he had just parted with, would be made up to him, by the future Conduct of him who was come in his Stead; and for some Years he was not disappointed; he behav'd to his Master's Approbation, and entire

tire Satisfaction at Home; and in a manner which secured to him the Esteem and Regard of all his Master had any Dealings or Business with, and of his own Companions and Acquaintance in general, abroad.

But either Wantonness, thro' the Affluence, which the Wages and Perquisites of his Place furnished him with, or the prevalence of his natural vicious Inclinations, how much soever he had been able to restrain, and keep them smother'd till now, got the better of his Virtue, or rather of his Resolution to maintain that amiable Deportment, which had rendered him hitherto valued, and respected; and he now began to take very different Courses to those which had been the Support of his Character, at least whilst he had been in a Gentleman's Service.

His first Step to ruin, if the present sad Affair should prove his ruin, was the falling in, if common Fame says true, with the common Women of the Town, one of which, unless he is highly injured, he was weak enough to marry, and who is still living; tho' he has since been wicked enough to marry another Wife, who, is more immediately, tho' very undeservedly the Sharer of his Calamities, and partner in his Woe.

By the latter, who is as honest a Woman as lives, and whom he was so base as to deceive, and pass himself upon for a Batchelor, he has one Child living. The Child, with herself, has for a considerable Time been wholly the Mother's Charge; for though his Income was sufficient for him largely to have contributed to their Subsistence; he has let his Money of late, run all in a different Channel; and has so much abandoned himself to a criminal Conversation, if we may take his honest Wife's Word for it, with the criminal Creatures of the Town, that he had not only given over a Converse with her, and all Care of providing for either Mother or Infant, but for many Months she seldom or never saw him, but at her Expence, and when he came to plunder her of Goods which her Shop could supply him with; and which it had not been furnished with at a Shilling Cost to him; for this Woman, who owes to him alone the being unfortunate, was set up in a sort of a Stocking Shop, and the Haberdashery way, by her own Relations, in *Princess-Street, Leicester-Fields*; had her Shop furnished with Goods, and a Sum of Money given her, sufficient to carry on Trade, by some rich Friends of her own; who declared the sole Inducements to their being so kind to her, where the Injuries she had

had suffered, and was like to sustain, by being deceiv'd in, and ill-treated by a Husband on one Hand, and her own personal Worth and Deserts on the other.

In this Situation, this valuable Woman has lived, and lived handsomely for some-time; she has maintain'd her Character, and her Credit in Trade; been always respected by her Acquaintance and Neighbours, and might still have been in the same agreeable Circumstances had she not been obliged to provide for the worst; and to guard against the Consequences of what has been so strongly urged against her Husband, proving too well grounded, she thought it prudent to knock off Trade at once; so that when he was committed to prison, she shut up Shop:

But now, Sir, I am to display a still much darker Scene; one so gaffly and horrid, so black and bloody, that for our Country-sake at least, it were heartily to be wished that it had been laid in any other Nation, rather than in *Great-Britain*.

Tho' before I go upon a more minute Discussion of Particulars, and of the personal Behaviour of *James Hall*, as promised, before and since his being taken up, I shall insert the Sum of all that has already been published, relating to this dismal Affair, deserving

deserving public Attention ; which please to take as follows :

On *Thursday*, the 2d of *July*, the Coroner's Inquest finish'd their Examinations, in Relation to the barbarous Murder of *John Penny*, Esq; late Principal of *Clements-Inn*, and Deputy Pay-master of the Pensions, and brought in their Verdict *Wilful Murder*, against *James Hall*, late Servant to the said Mr. *Penny*. — It appear'd that Mr. *Penny* had not been seen by any of his Friends or Relations, since *Wednesday* Night the 17th of *June* last, till he was found in *Clements-Inn* Boguehouse, on the 30th of *June*, with his Throat cut from Ear to Ear, the right Side of his Skull (behind) broke so terribly, that his Brains came out, and his own black Waistcoat tied all over his Head and Face. It appear'd also, that his Chambers were robb'd of several Bank Notes (particularly one No. 88. payable to *Thomas Welch*, for 50*l.* dated *May* 9, 1741) and large Sums of Money ; several Rings were likewise stolen, particularly an Emerald one set with Diamonds ; also a shagreen Case, with silver hafted Knives and Forks, and Spoons, and several other Things of Value. — A Parcel which *Hall* had left with his Taylor, with Directions to keep it safe, being of Value, has, by the Honesty of the Taylor, been

been deliver'd to Col. *De Veil*, and the Things therein contained are known by Numbers of People to have belong'd to Mr. *Penny*. — The Landress who wash'd the Rooms, found great Quantities of smear'd Blood in both the Rooms, tho' it was apparent they had been wash'd with Water, and wiped before she came to them; and even after she had wash'd them the Staines were very visble. The said *Hall* in excuse, pretended that his Master had bled at the Nose on *Wednesday* Night, after he came Home, and bled in the Chamber-pot, and that as his Master was carrying the Pot to his Bed-side, he let it fall, which blooded the Rooms; that his Master went out on *Thursday* the 18th of *June*, about 9 in the Morning, and told him, as he pretends (tho' he was then murder'd) That *he was going by Water, should dine out, and ordered his Rooms to be wash'd, that they might be dry before he came Home at Night*; and by several Discourses, this Wretch would have impos'd on the World, that his Master had either destroy'd himself, or, that he had gone by Water, and was there robb'd and murder'd; but by his being found in *Clements-Inn* Boghouse, so near his Chambers, quite naked, except his Waistcoat tied about his Head, to prevent the Blood running about; his having been
seen

seen by no body since the *Wednesday* Night, he came Home; and by his Chambers being rifled of Bank Notes, Money, Plate, &c. and yet all the Places lock'd that contain'd them, leaves no room to doubt, but that *James Hall* committed the horrid Fact, and then robb'd the Chambers.

Thus far the World has already, Sir, been let into the Nature of the Offence; and of the Strength of some of the Reasons which sway'd with the Gentlemen concern'd to look upon Mr. *Penny's* own Servant as the heinous Offender, on whom they ought to turn the Weight of their Resentment; and whom they ought to deliver over into the Hands of publick Justice, for their Country to determine whether he deserved the Treatment he has met with; as well as to put it into its Power to inflict the much heavier Weights of Woe than any he at present's under, and which he will deserve to the utmost of all that is within the Reach of Man to load him with, should the Proof of his Guilt be but half as plain, as the Suspicion of it is strong.

But to review these Particulars a little, which I assure myself are already come to your Hands, will assist me, Sir, to a right timing of many other Incidents, which Mankind in general, especially in your part of the World, are altogether Strangers to.

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You'll be pleas'd to observe, Sir, that the poor murder'd Gentleman was not seen as the Account before mentioned takes Notice of, after the 17th Day of *June*, by any of his Friends, till his woeful mangled Corps was taken out of the Bogg-house, cover'd with Filth, and disfigured by Wounds, on the 30th of the same Month; so that it lay about thirteen Days at the Bottom of Soil nine Foot deep, and surrounded by many Tons of Noisome, Impurities in a Jakes, till it became almost simular to the Stench, and to the Corruption of the Place; a sad Receptacle indeed for hoary Hairs, and for one of the anti-ents of the People, grown venerable for Age and Wisdom to be deposited in.

But can any Person imagine, Sir, that the Friends of the Deceased were Idle all this Time; a very few Friends must he have had, and those very strongly engag'd, or very negligent, if they had; but he was better provided. The Relations and Friends of the Deceased were indefatigable in their Endeavours, to be let into the Secret of who were concern'd in the dreadful Scene. One Mr. *Wotton*, a Bookseller, near *Temple-Bar*, especially, who was Nephew to the Deceased, spared no Pains or Expences to traverse the hidden Scene of Villainy, and come at the Murderer; and his Labours

were at length so far crown'd with Success, that he laid hold of the Man, and secured him, in order to receive the Reward of his Deserts, as far, as if he is the guilty Man, 'tis in the Power of humane Justice to give it him, whom there is not one Person in a thousand Companies to be met with, who does not firmly believe, that he was the Person who carried the execrable Design against the Life of his Master into Execution.

The Incident which first gave the Alarm, was that of the Blood in Mr. Penny's Chambers ; and Mrs. Laws, who is the Wife of one of the Porters in *Clement's-Inn*, and was Landress to Mr. Penny, who clean'd out the Chambers, as is said before, began to be more than ordinarily uneasy about the third Day after her Master was missing, as not having heard any Thing from him, and she communicated her Fears and Suspicions to one and another of her Acquaintance, till they reach'd Mr. Wotton's Ear, who immediately sent for her and her Husband, and procuring the Assistance of his Friend Mr. Dovey, who is a Gentleman of *Clement's-Inn*, privately examined them, at the same time charging 'em that *James Hall* should be kept an entire Stranger to that Meeting ; and he accordingly was so till after his being apprehended himself.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Laws* readily and fully let them into all she knew, and a very consistent Account she gave of all that had passed between *Hall* and herself, in Relation to the Blood in his Master's Chambers; the Sum of which is inserted in the general Account before. As for Mr. *Laws*, it not being his Turn to set up in the Lodge that Night the Murder is supposed to have been committed, he heard no passing or re-passing in the Inn, or did he know any Thing relating to the Blood but what his Wife had told him of; she had told him of it indeed the same Day that she clean'd the Chambers in; but at that Time neither of them thought any more of it, but that of Course, all that *Hall* had said to them was true; for Mr. *Penny* was subject to bleeding at the Nose, and *Hall* was then the last Man in the World they should have suspected, of making him bleed either at that or any other Part; they were only sorry to find their good Master had bled so much more that Night than he used to do, and to hear that he was not well in the Morning, as the insidious Man would have had them believe, when he went out, as he pretended, to take the Air.

But one Particular ought by no means to be omitted here, it being what prevailed much with both Mr. *Dovey* and

Mr. *Wotton*, (as indeed it must do with every other Person who hears of it) to make them believe that *Hall* knew a much better Reason for that Blood's being in his Master's Chamber, than the frivolous one he was pleased to give.

Mrs. *Laws* declared farther than was hinted before, that when he came to her that Morning, he told her, that he had got a Job for her; and that she must come away immediately and do it; and that if she could not come directly, he must be oblig'd to go and get somebody else who cou'd; that he then let her know what it was to do, and gave for a Reason of his being so pressing, that his Master who was, as he said, gone out that Morning, might be back again for any Thing he knew to the contrary, before the Chambers were dry, and fit for him to come into; that that Reason prevailed with her at that Time; but having laid, as she said, Things together since, and having had Leisure more thoroughly to consider them, she could not readily account for *Hall's* being in so great a Hurry with her then, but by perswading herself, that he was under Apprehensions that the longer the Blood continued upon the Floor, it would be the harder to get it out of the Boards, and prevent Stains; and therefore he was so earnest with her to set about scow'ring

scow'ring the Rooms, least more Marks should appear than a little more than ordinary bleeding at the Nose, could with any Probability occasion.

This Examination, and 'tis not rational to suppose it could do less, furnished sufficient Grounds of Suspicion against *Hall*; and had Mr. *Penny's* Brother, who is Dean of *Litchfield* and *Coventry*, Prebend of *Norwich*, and Rector of *Bedington* in *Surrey*, been in Town, the suspected Murderer had, without Doubt, been immediately laid hold of; but as his Behaviour did not give the least Room to believe he intended to make an Escape, and as the Gentlemen were well assured that the Examination of Mr. *Laws* and his Wife was not known to him, and would be kept a perfect Secret from him as long as they thought fit, for if otherwise, 'tis likely he might have attempted an Escape. Mrs. *Laws* being the only Person he had acquainted with the Affair of the Blood: This, Sir, I say, being the Case, Mr. *Wotton* was inclined to let Mr. *Penny*, who was then at *Norwich*, know of all that had passed, and receive Directions from him how to act, rather than take so material a Step without him. *Hall* was therefore left at large to the 29th Day of *June*, and not the least Hint given him, or could he from Mr. *Wotton's*,

Wotton's, or any other Person's Conduct towards him, apprehend that he was looked upon, or suspected to have had any Share in the dreadful Fate which had attended his Master.

During this Interval, he lay at the Chambers every Night, and he made, or pretended to make, the strictest Enquiry after his Master, of every Person, and in every Place he could possibly have imagined, had he been living, 'twas probable to have heard any thing of him : He was sure once or twice a Day at least, to call upon Mr. *Wotton*, to receive Directions from him, and he seemed to regulate himself wholly by his Orders ; and the Concern he endeavoured to express both by his Words and Looks before this Gentleman, and others of his Master's Acquaintance, for *what must have become of his poor Master*, would have tempted those who were as much in the Dark as he perhaps would have had them, and thought they were, to believe that he was an entire Stranger to any Blood being in his Master's Chambers, but what came from his Master's Nose.

'Twas Mr. *Penny's* constant Custom to have his Breakfast from *New-Inn* Coffee-house, which his Man *James Hall* fetch'd, with a News-Paper, for him every Morning ;

ing ; and on the 18th, the Morning he was missing, *Hall* fetched these as usual, as has been sworn to ; but not any Person can tell us so well as himself, for whose Benefit the Breakfast was that Morning, brought earlier than ordinarily, into the Chambers.

About two or three Days after his Master had been missing, *Hall* went to his own *Taylor*, and delivered to him the Parcel mentioned above, and which having Occasion to speak more of in a more proper Place, I shall only observe here, that when he gave this Parcel into his Hands, which was sealed up, he gave also a strict Charge to the *Taylor*, not to deliver it to any Person but himself, which the other, little thinking what was in it, promised he would not : At the same Time *Hall* paid him four Pounds, which he owed him upon his own Account ; for, as he neither at Mr. *Penny's*, or at his former Master's, wore a Livery, he found his own Cloaths.

During the whole Time he was at Liberty after his Master's going, *as he called it*, from his Chambers, he behaved in the same manner he used to do among his Companions ; most of whom, especially those of them who resorted to a House where he commonly Dined, being at Board Wages, thought him as sober, honest a Man

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as lived, and valued him accordingly : When at any Time he shewed any Concern, they attributed it wholly to the not knowing what was become of his Master, and looked upon it that his only Affliction was the not being able to find him out ; but as he declared that every Day brought him fresh Hopes of seeing him soon, he did not think fit to abate much of his usual Diversions upon that Account, but daily played at Cards for a Mug of Drink or two, which was the most the House he played in would allow of, as was customary with him, and at such Times he would be as merry as formerly. Whether he was to be blamed or not for thus endeavouring to make his Conduct appear consonant to what it had been ; out of Fear, perhaps, that if he had acted otherwise, he might have infused Notions into his Companions Heads, which might not have proved much to his Advantage, I shall not take upon me to determine. Some may be apt to think, that if he had had that real Concern at Heart, which he pretended to have for not knowing what was become of his Master, he would not have thought it any Injury to himself, to have shewed the great Uneasiness of his Mind, how great soever, if he had had no ill Consequences to dread from its being taken Notice of, by refraining at least

least from all Manner of Gaming, and every Thing else which might shew Levity and Unconcern'dness, for a much longer Time than he thought fit to do ; but in this Article, as in many other Parts of his Behaviour, if the Strength of Suspicions may be allow'd of any Weight with us, we shall in a few Weeks, Sir, be out of the Dark, as to the true Reasons for such Conduct.

But tho' if I should attempt it, I persuade myself, that it would not be an easy Task to make Mankind believe, that he had not, even at this Juncture, Reasons best known to himself, and the strongest in the World, to have engaged him to any other Sort of Carriage, and to be otherwise employ'd, than in the Manner in which he threw away his Time, and by which he strove, 'tis suggested, to divert the Anguish of his Breast ; but whether he had then, or not, such private Reasons to a different disposition of Mind, and more serious Reflections on what had happened ; a few Days furnished him with those of a more public Nature, which any Man in his Senses would have thought should have caused the wish'd for Alteration in him ; but to the Surprise of all who came near him, he was still to Appearance the same:

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However, the Hour which was to make the Discovery of what others thought of him; whatever he might strive to make the World think, drew on now a-pace; Mr. *Wotton* had written to Dr. *Penny*, and expected an Answer on *Monday* the 29th of *June* to his Letter; on the Morning of which, *James Hall* went to him, to receive his Commands, and to enquire if he had heard any Thing of his Master? Mr. *Wotton* told him, he had not heard a Word of his Uncle; but at the same Time, desired him to be at the Sign of the *Oxford-Arms* in *Horton-Street*, in *Clare-market*, about 5 o'Clock in the Afternoon that Day, and stay there till he came to him, for he did not know, he said, but that he should want him in the Evening. This, *Hall* at going away, promised to do, and he was as good as his Word.

This is the House *Hall* used to Dine at; 'tis a very reputable House, not any Disorders are allowed of, or any Gaming in it, unless playing now and then, between a few Friends, or a Gentleman's Servant or two, for a Pint of Drink or so, may be called Gaming; the Persons who keep it, are very sober, honest, worthy People, well respected and valued in their Neighbourhood; and the Master of the House has lost a very valuable Friend, and one of the
best

best he had in the World, by the Murder of Mr. *Penny*; who was his Master eight Years and a Quarter; and who, as he has often declared, was as good a Master as any Man would ever desire to live with; and that he had not left him then, had not the Prospect of bettering himself in the World, and which Mr. *Penny* readily gave way to, by taking the very House he now lives in, been his Inducement to come away. He lov'd his Master, and his Master lov'd him, and shew'd he did so, upon all Occasions: If his old Servant wanted a Sum of Money, at any Time to make good a Payment, or to advance in purchase of a Parcel of Goods in his Way, which tho' a dead Stock for the present, there was a probability of going off afterwards to his advantage, he was always sure of it from Mr. *Penny*; for whatever time he named to him, without a Shilling Interest; such an agreeable Testimony as this, did that worthy Gentleman think fit to give, to his Approbation of the valuable Behaviour of the Master of the *Oxford-Arms*, both during the Time, and since, he was his Servant; so that the Villain, who ever he is, who has been the Murderer of so good a Man, has done an extensive Injury; and in one Crime, the most shocking to human Nature, has been guilty of a Complication of other horrid

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Crimes,

Crimes, equally out of his Power of making Reparation for ; and, for any Thing he knew to the contrary, whilst he was cutting his Master's Throat, was stabbing many an honest Man, his Master was a Friend to, to the Heart ; and in this light, if he would ever expect Forgiveness of Heaven, he ought to view the direful Tragedy he has been the Principal, if not the only Actor in.

But to return, *Hall* stay'd as Mr. *Wotton* desired him to do ; but hearing nothing of him for several Hours after the Time appointed, he went to Cards with one of his Companions, and kept playing 'till Mr. *Wotton* came, which was between eight and nine at Night : Mr. *Wotton* stood in the Street and called him out, *Hall* threw down the Cards, and stepping up upon the Benches, sprang over a Partition, which seperated two Boxes, and ran out to him ; as soon as he heard the Voice, the Company, which were in the Room, say, that his Countenance changed a little, and he turned pale.

Mr. *Wotton* kept him in talk about a Minute, when the Persons appointed to secure him, who were at hand, came up, and made him their Prisoner : He readily submitted, and indeed it would have been altogether in vain for him to have done otherwise :

wise. He was carry'd directly before Justice *De Veil*, in *Bow-street, Covent - Garden*, and examin'd: He asserted his Innocence, and deny'd his Guilt; and both in as strong Terms as he could express himself by, and in which he was far from being deficient: He accounted for the Blood in his Masters Chambers in the same manner he had done to Mrs. *Laws*, the Laundress; and stood to every Thing he had told her, and others, of his Master's bleeding at the Nose, and going out the next Morning for a little Air, upon finding himself indispos'd; without deviating in the least from any part of the Tale he had cook'd up, so that no Impression could be made upon him that Night; however, they were determin'd not to part with him so; and he was committed to the *Gatehouse*, for farther Examination in the Morning, where, at Mr. *Wotton's* particular Request, he was used with all imaginable Tenderness.

If *Hall* was the merciless Butcher of his Master, which God forbid I should yet absolutely assert, how glaring and strong soever, the presumption of his having been so, may appear against him; it will then be believ'd that the firm persuasion he had possessed his Mind with, that he had effectually secured the Body from ever being found whilst any Flesh remain'd on the
Bones,

Bones, or, at least any Marks to distinguish it from the Deceased putrified Body of any other Man, was his chief Inducement to brave it out in the Manner he did, both before his being taken up, and at his first Examination; but Wretch that he was; if that was the Case, he might for a Time indeed elude all human Enquiries, and deceive the Eye of Man; but could he ever hope to shut out the all-seeing, all-searching Eye of that God, before whom, the dark Assassin, the midnight Murderer, is as naked and bare, as if executing his direful Purposes under a meridian Sun, and in the Face of the whole Creation.

A Thought imprest by Providence upon the Mind but of one Man, often renders all the Devices, the thoroughly concerted, and long projected Designs of the Wicked, for their own Security, vain in an Instant; and this seems to have been exactly the Case in relation to this unhappy murdered Gentleman: It was no sooner resolved upon to take up his Murderer, as he was suppos'd to be, but Mr. *Wotton* became determined to have *Clements - Inn Boghouse* searched for the Body, which according to his Orders, was done the next Morning.

The Soil was deep, the Quantity large; but the Rakes went to the Bottom, and in a few Minutes brought up a naked Body
to

to the Surface; with the Leggs uppermost; here they held it, till getting a Cord round one of the Legs, they drew it out, and laid it (a woeful dreadful Spectacle to behold) upon the Floor.

And certainly a more shocking Sight has seldom or never been seen; had his Murderer been present, he must have been worse than a Devil incarnate, if such a Creature exists on Earth, not to have been mov'd; and was that Murderer his Servant, how much is it to be lamented, that he was not present to view his late worthy aged Master, who had been his Friend and Benefactor, and had always behaved kind and gentle towards him, in that miserable Condition; to see him, who when alive was of Weight and Influence where ever he went, continually doing good, and was loved and honoured by all, treated more like a mad Dog than a Man, knock'd o' th' Head, and thrown into a Jakes, out of which his Body naked, even to the wanting of a Shirt, was just then dragg'd; so cover'd with Filth, as has been observed, that it seem'd at first like a Part of what it was taken out of. Surely such a Sight must have turn'd the Wretch into Stone, or instantly have melted down his harder Heart to Tears, Confession and Penitence; but if neither, it must have filled the Villain's Breast with agonizing Tortures, like those

those which such Villains here, and the Damned below, only feel.

But his supposed Murderer being then at too great a Distance, a Prisoner in the *Gatehouse*, to be fetch'd immediately, it was not thought proper to do it. The Body was washed upon the Spot; over the Head and round the Neck a Waistcoat was tied, which upon Examination was found to be Mr. *Penny's*, and prov'd a very remarkable one, as will presently appear.

This Waistcoat being taken off, the Wounds were seen, and the Use which had been made of it discover'd, as related before; and how serviceable soever it might have been to conceal the Blood of the murder'd Person from immediate Inspection; it was now by Providence, made very instrumental in confirming Mankind in their Opinion, that the Man whom they had suspected was the Murderer.

This was *Tuesday* the 30th. of *June* when the Body was found, which when washed was carry'd to the Chambers, out of which it was undoubtedly carry'd before; the Waistcoat being washed was presently known, and the Taylor being sent for who made Mr. *Penny's* Cloaths, was ready to swear he made that very Waistcoat for him; but *Hall* upon his second coming before the Justice saved him the Trouble of doing so.

Colonel

Colonel *Deveil* being made acquainted with these Things, dispatch'd a Messenger to the Keeper of the *Gatehouse*, to take special Care of his Prisoner, and to bring him before him fetter'd in the Afternoon ; for at Mr. *Wotton's* Request he had none on the first Night. This Messenger met the Keeper and his Assistants just stepping into a Coach with their Prisoner, whom they had allow'd to walk thro' the *Park*, going to the Justice's House, according to the Orders given the Night before, to bring him in the Morning for farther Examination. The Messenger deliver'd his Message privately to the Keeper, who going up to the Coach, told *Hall*, that the Justice being oblig'd to go out, he had received fresh Orders, and that he was to carry him down in the Afternoon ; then getting into the Coach, bid the Man drive to the *Gatehouse*. As soon as *Hall* came in, he was convey'd into the proper Room, where without letting him know any other Reason for it than what they were going to do, was what the Justice had sent Word he would have done, they loaded him with Irons ; *Hall* seem'd much surprized and concerned, tho' he said but little, and in the Afternoon accordingly, he was carried in a Landau from the *Gatehouse* to the Justice's.

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There he was let into the Secret of the Fetters; Mr. *Wotton* and Mr. *Penny's* Taylor among others were present. When the Waistcoat clean as it could be made, which was round his Master's Neck was produc'd, there was a great Alteration in his Countenance, they need not have told him, 'tis believ'd, that the Body was found, he knew how they came by it, and he looked as if he would have sunk into the Ground; so that a Gentleman immediately said, *That Fellow is certainly the Murderer of his Master, you may see it by his Face.*

However he bravado'd it off as well as he could, and stood to it as he had done before, that he was perfectly Innocent, knew nothing of the Matter; and that if the Body of his Master was found in the Bog-house, as they said it was, which he did not pretend to dispute, it was not he who threw it there, or did he know who did.

After he had done with his round of Assertions, and Protestations of his Innocence, he was calmly ask'd if he knew that Waistcoat, which was held up to him, he said, *Yes*; they then asked him whose it was? he said his Master's, and that it was the very Waistcoat which his Master went out in on the 18th Day of *June*, the last Day he said, that he ever set Eyes upon him; the latter Part of which was
thought

thought might be true. Mr. Wotton then said to him, *James, consider with yourself a little, ar'n't you mistaken? Are you sure 'twas this Waistcoat my Uncle went out in?* Yes, Sir, says he, *I am sure that was the very Waistcoat.* Why, James, reply'd Mr. Wotton, *these Waistcoats my Uncle never wore but in Winter, he had them made for cold Weather only; he had other Waistcoats for warm Weather, and has worn the latter all this Summer; how came it to happen, that he should put on this thick Waistcoat upon so hot a Day as the 18th of June was?* Why really he did not know, he said what was his Reason for it, but however he was sure he did put it on, and that was all he could say to it.

His Examination being over, and all present thoroughly persuaded of his Guilt, a fresh *Mittimus* was made out, and Justice Deveil committed him to Newgate, where he now lies by a Detainer from the Coroner; being found by the Coroner's Jury guilty of the wilful Murder of his Master, to take his Tryal, and be acquitted or condemn'd, as a righteous God the Avenger of innocent Blood, and the Justice of his Country shall determine, at the ensuing Sessions at the Old-Bailey, which begins on the 28th Day of the next Month. But tho' he could not think of any Reason

son when before the Justice, for his Master's putting on a thick Waistcoat double lined, as it really was, on a Summer's Day, yet *Newgate* it seems has refreshed his Memory, or quicken'd his Invention; for he has found out, or somebody for him, one of the best that could be thought of; he now says, his Master would wear it that Day, because he was a little indisposed when he went out; and because he was to go by Water that Morning. These are at present his Reasons for it, but the more probable Reason of its being found where it was, is, that being very thick, 'twas fitter for the Use which was made of it, which was, to retain the Blood, and keep it from dropping upon the Pavement, which issued from his Master's broken Skull, and cut Throat, whilst his Body as carrying round the Garden to be thrown into the Bog-house.

And here allow me, Sir, to give you a Relation which comes well attested to me, and which as I apprehend, will come in a *propós* enough here. A little before Mr. Penny left the last Company of his Friends that he ever was in, which was about 11 at Night on the 17th of June, he said to them, *My Man James is grown a sad Fellow, a sad bad Fellow; for sometime, says he, I have seeldom or never come to my Chambers*

Chambers of a Night, but I have found a Whore with him, and I am persuaded he has several Times concealed one all Night, and let her out before I was up in the Morning; I am determin'd to part with him, and tho' I hate new Faces, he is not to be borne with any longer, and he shall go.

This being remember'd by the Company, has given Rise to a Conjecture, and not a very improbable one neither, supposing at the same Time that the Murderer is discover'd, that Mr. Penny finding Matters, as he had often found them before, he gave his Man Warning that Night, upon which the Devil put him upon the Commission of the horrid Act he stands charged with.

But to return to the Prisoner: The Day he was committed to *Newgate*, he sent the Letter, annex'd, to the Taylor, with whom he had left the Parcel mention'd before, desiring of him to bring or send it to him; but like a wise and an honest Man, he took a Friend with him upon receiving *Hall's* Letter, and carry'd it to Justice *Deveil*, who sending for Mr. *Wotton*, had it open'd before them all; in it were two Razors, a Case of Instruments, and a Purse with 23 Guineas in it; the Guineas *Hall* says were his own, but the other Things he owns were his Master's: They are all secured

cured in order to their being produced at his Trial.

The Cloaths which Mr. *Penny* wore the Day he was said to go out, have not been found, or his Shirt, or bloody Linnen of any Sort, but 'tis certain that *Hall* was seen to help two Porters up with each a large Hamper, which were carry'd out of the Inn about the third Morning after Mr. *Penny* was missing; tho' what they contained is yet a Secret reserved for the Discovery of a future Day.

Fetters and a Prison, the dark Dungeon-like Appartment in *Newgate*, which the Sun never sees, and which Night or Day has no light but that of a Candle, in which he is confined, seem to have made no Manner of Alteration as to the Disposition of the Man; he eats and drinks, plays at Cards, and talks to those who go to see him, much as he used to do; still avows his being guiltless of the Crime, he was sent thither on the Suspicion of, and in general behaves in the Manner a Man could not reasonably have expected he would have behav'd in, unless he really was so; and were there not Persons enough in Town who have been to visit him since his commitment, who could witness that his Behaviour is rightly represented here; the Accounts he has sent to his Father and Brothers in the Country

Country, would afford us at least sufficient Testimony that he would feign have the World believe that he is both innocent and injured.

But I have done with him, Sir, when I have just mentioned to you how inexcusable his Circumstances, setting every other Consideration aside, must make him appear, should he become convicted of the Crime he is now only charged with: He had no one but himself to provide for; his Wages were Ten Pounds a Year, his Board-wages Seven Shillings a Week, and his Vales considerable; besides which, six hundred Pounds would have come to him at the Death of his Father, who is fourscore Years of Age, and according to the Course of Nature, cannot be suppos'd to live much longer; if therefore he has been guilty of this great Wickedness, it must have been to answer the exorbitant Demands of his abandoned Practices, rather than from being in necessity, or any Straits, but what to support a vicious Life must have led him into.

So much of Mr. *Penny's* general Character has necessarily been introduced, thro' the Course of the preceeding Pages, as leaves no Room for any Addition. He was a valuable, worthy Man, and infinitely deserving of a better Fate; but Heaven suffered it to be otherwise, and he fell by
the

the bloody Hands of a merciless Villain, or Villains, who treated him as infamously when dead, as cruelly whilst living.

Mr. *Penny* was known to carry more Money constantly about him, than most Gentlemen usually do, and to be fond of large Sums in Bank-Bills in his Chambers, and his Man was acquainted with both. May his sad End be a Warning to others, who being single Gentlemen like him, lay such a Temptation in the Way of Servants, who, if they have a Mind to become Villains, have the Lives of their Masters in their Power, almost whenever they please.

My Subject has all along given me Pain, my only Pleasure is now to come; which is to review my having been able thus to comply with your Request, and to embrace this as a fresh Opportunity to assure you how much I esteem your Friendship, and value myself upon being thought,

S I R,
20 MA 59

LONDON,
July 6, 1741.

Your Friend, and

Humble Servant,

G. H.

A P P E N-



APPENDIX.

The Copy of a LETTER, from two Brothers of *James Hall*, to an Acquaintance in *Westminster*.

S I R,

July 1, 1741.

WE take the Liberty to write to you, because we know that you are acquainted with our Brother *James Hall*, who lives with *Mr. Penny*, of *Clement's-Inn*; we have heard that a Misfortune has befallen him, and desire of you to let us know the Right of the Matter, as soon as possible; we did not know any Person who could, as we thought, inform us so well as yourself; therefore if you will be so kind as to favour us with an Account you will very much oblige,

S I R, your humble Servants,

Michael and William Hall.

F

Pray

Pray remember our Love to him, and let him know, that his Father and we are well.

Direct for William Hall, at Stapeley Farm, near Odiham, in Hampshire.

The Copy of the Answer to the above
LETTER.

GENTLEMEN, West. July 4, 1741.

I Received yours, and at your Desire, though very disagreeable to myself, have herein sent you a short Account of your unfortunate Brother. He is now in Newgate, on Suspicion of both robbing and of murdering his Master. The Coroner's Inquest have sat twice on the Body, and upon finishing their Examination, they brought in their Verdict, Wilful Murder, against your unhappy Brother; but his Trial will not come on this Sessions. To give you all the Particulars of the barbarous Fact, would be too long for a Letter, and much too shocking for me to recount; I therefore refer you to the News-Papers, where you may read a Tragedy, which will make your poor Hearts ach. He denies the whole Charge against him; but I think, and every Person I have talked to about him does

does the same, that Circumstances bear hard against him. I sent him your Letter; he read it over several times; desir'd me to give his Love to you, and sent me Word, he would write into the Country in a little Time.

I am, GENTLEMEN,

YOURS, &c.

The Copy of a LETTER to James Hall, to press him to write to his Father, or Brothers, after his Commitment to Newgate.

MR. HALL,

West. July 5, 1741.

I Beg and intreat of you to be speedy in writing into the Country: Let your Father or Brothers have a Letter, no Matter which, provided one or the other hear from you: They seem very uneasy; and 'tis very certain, not any Person can make them otherwise, so soon as yourself; if therefore you value your Father's Quiet, or hope for his Blessing and Prayers, you will not only excuse your Friend from being so pressing with you, but immediately take Care that he has no Occasion to re-

now this Request to you. I wish you Support whilst your Affliction lasts, and a speedy Deliverance out of it.

I am yours, &c.

The Copy of a LETTER, which *James Hall* sent to his Father, pursuant to his Friend's Advice.

Honour'd FATHER,

THIS comes to you from a Place I never thought of being in; 'tis a dismal Place, and your poor Son is in great Calamity; but don't be disheartened, Father, I don't doubt but I shall come out of it. I hope you won't let me want, whilst I am here, but assist me to when I come to my Trial, which I hear will be a Day or two before the End of next Month. I was carried Yesterday to the Place where they try the Prisoners here, called the Old-Bailey, but they would not try me then, tho' I wishted they would, but sent me back again to Prison; they had not I suppose time enough for it then, for the Court broke up that very Night. I thank you for sending my Brother to see me; he was some Hours with me this Afternoon; I was sorry it was not in a better Place. I am not the first
Man

*Man who has been wrongfully charged ;
and you may depend upon it, Father, I
am as innocent of the Murder of my
dear Master, who has been a good Master
indeed to me, as the Child unborn. Be
comforted ; I hope all will be well. Pray
give my Love to my Brothers. Pray God
bless you and them both. I hope to hear
soon from you again. I am well in
Health, but sad is my Condition.*

*From the Master's-Side
in Newgate, Sunday,
July 5, 1741.*

I am, Father,

Your dutiful, but

Sorrowful Son,

James Hall.

The Copy of the LETTER, which *James Hall* sent to his *Taylor*, the Day he was committed to *Newgate*.

Mr. K——T,

I *Am taken up, and sent to this Place,
for murdering of my Master, they say,
and throwing of him into the Bogg-house
of our Inn ; but I know nothing of it and
hope I shall be soon out again. I / m
and*

(46)

would come away to me immediately,
and bring the Parcel which I left with
you, and desired that you would not de-
liver it to any Body but to myself; how-
ever, if you can't come, send it, for I
want some of the Things which are in
it. Enquire for the Master's-Side at
Newgate. By this you will oblige,

Your Servant to command,

James. Hall.

20 MA 59

F I N I S.



